

HANOVER CONSERVANCY



Promise to Protect

2021-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

As we mark the Hanover Conservancy's 60th anniversary (1961-2021), we proudly present this strategic plan to strengthen and guide our organization forward for the next five years and beyond.

OUR MISSION

The Hanover Conservancy, the oldest local land trust in New Hampshire, strives to protect the land and waters of our community through land conservation and stewardship, education, and advocacy for conservation-oriented public policy. An independent private, not-for-profit membership organization, the Conservancy is a community land trust that partners frequently with the Town of Hanover and other local and regional organizations.

OUR VISION

We envision a healthy, resilient Hanover where people can live, learn, and play in a natural environment that retains its distinctive character.

OUR CORE VALUES

Community: We strive to serve as a meaningful partner to benefit our community and to position it to be resilient to the effects of climate change. We recognize that our rich human history is also the story of the land around us.

Equity: Equity is essential to the health of our community, our environment, and our organization. We recognize that inequities exist in access to nature, and we are committed to making the Conservancy and our lands welcoming to all.

Engagement: The Hanover Conservancy provides opportunities and space for people to connect with the natural world and with each other. We seek to offer a diversity of engaging programs to inspire curiosity, understanding, and appreciation of this natural heritage.

Stewardship: The Conservancy works to support long-term sustainability by practicing and teaching best land stewardship practices. These lands and waters have been home to Indigenous Peoples for thousands of years. The Conservancy recognizes and honors the Abenaki as the traditional stewards of this landscape. We strive to respect and protect conserved land and waters in our community in a way that reflects this understanding.

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◀ Mink Brook Community Forest meadow; photo by Mim Adkins for the Trust for Public Land



LAND CONSERVATION

GOAL: *Protect land and water, both in town and in rural Hanover, for climate change mitigation, ecosystem resilience, water quality, and recreation.*

After 60 years as Hanover’s land trust, our conservation priorities continue to evolve as science improves our understanding of how best to serve our community. Compelling conservation opportunities exist to address the urgent threat of climate change through habitat protection; flood security measures, and carbon capture. As our town grows, we will strive to protect those woods, fields, and waters that give our community its inspiring landscape.



OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS
Protect priority lands and waters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Focus conservation efforts on lands in each part of town determined to be high priority for Hanover that reflect important natural resource values, the latest climate change-related science, and places that tell the story of our community’s natural and diverse cultural heritage.◆ Ensure a safe and reliable drinking water supply.
Support local and regional climate mitigation and resilience efforts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Focus protection efforts on streams and rivers, wetlands, wildlife corridors, carbon storage opportunities, higher elevation lands, and lands connecting protected parcels.◆ Support flood security for Etna Village and the Greensboro corridor by protecting lands in the upper Mink Brook watershed.◆ Advocate for development of appropriately sited renewable energy projects.◆ Prioritize lands that link to the larger regional landscape for habitat connectivity.
Broaden and strengthen conservation partnerships across the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Continue to be a reliable partner with the Town of Hanover and others.◆ Be open to opportunities to achieve land conservation while allowing for thoughtful development.


“ We are thrilled about the new conservation on Greensboro Road. We love walking along the brook and feel so grateful that it was a priority of yours and the town to ensure its protection. Thank you!”

LAND STEWARDSHIP

GOAL: *Care for our protected lands by safeguarding their long-term ecological health while making them welcoming to the entire community.*

At one level, stewardship means ensuring both the Conservancy and landowners are meeting their legal obligations. At a deeper level, it means preparing for and addressing larger threats, such as climate change, habitat loss, invasive species, and both apathy and overuse. Stewardship is about balancing ecological integrity with the needs, expectations, and dreams of our neighbors in Hanover and beyond.



OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS
Plan for a healthy future for Hanover Conservancy properties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Demonstrate appropriate techniques for restoring habitat, managing invasive species, and encouraging biodiversity.◆ Affirm overall land management policies that are ecologically sound and consistent with Land Trust Alliance Standards & Practices.◆ Provide adequate maintenance, signage and blazing on all trails and boundaries.
Use stewardship activities to engage the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Work with civic and school groups and business partners in land stewardship efforts.◆ Promote scientific research where appropriate.
Prepare for long-term financial responsibilities on conservation lands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Ensure adequate land stewardship funds for care and legal defense of our conserved lands into the future.◆ Make a timeline for long-term capital improvements on our lands.
Fulfill commitments to easement landowners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Monitor our conservation easements and ensure timely enforcement when necessary.
Ensure that our lands are as accessible as possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Evaluate all HC-owned trails for access barriers and develop accessible trails and rustic resting places on our natural areas where feasible.

“ We so enjoyed the trails this summer and fall, an essential respite from the turmoil around us.”

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

GOAL: *Connect people to nature and the land in ways that support conservation and stewardship.*

Our conservation work relies on the trust, involvement, and support of the community. Firsthand experience with the land offers the opportunity to understand its value and the need for preservation. We strive to deepen the public's affection for and understanding of our local landscape, building a conservation ethic to sustain our community into the future.



OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS
<p>Create varied opportunities for people to engage with nature.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Offer a variety of programs suited to participants' needs, including indoor programs and guided outdoor experiences.◆ Expand self-guided activity offerings, including exploration and volunteer opportunities.◆ Pursue educational partnerships with local organizations and institutions.
<p>Encourage the next generation of environmental scientists.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Use our lands as learning sites for youth, including habitat restoration and trail maintenance. Pursue partnerships with local schools, educators, and students.◆ Offer an annual scholarship to deserving high school students in environmental science.◆ Explore recognition of an outstanding middle school student or educator with special interest in conservation.
<p>Deepen appreciation of Hanover's natural and cultural landscape.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Illustrate the relationship between Hanover's residents and its landscape through time to reveal how the natural world affects our human history and vice versa.

“ We've been exploring ‘Hikes of the Month’ lately. Moose Mountain and the Ledges was fantastic. Please keep up that series!”



ADVOCACY

GOAL: *To support conservation, sustainability, climate mitigation, public health and equity, we will advocate for policy change when and where it advances our mission.*

The Hanover Conservancy’s roots are in local advocacy for conservation-oriented public policy. Faced with ongoing challenges of habitat loss, climate change, and inequitable access to the outdoors, we will maintain an active role in shaping public opinion and policy on these issues.

“Thank you for all the good work you are doing to preserve our region’s beautiful places.”

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS
<p>Be an advocate for climate resilience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Work with local partners (Sustainable Hanover, Upper Valley Climate Partners, Hanover High School and others) on community education regarding climate resilience.
<p>Deepen partnerships with the Town and Dartmouth College for more effective advocacy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Engage in the Town master planning process, supporting conservation, habitat protection, and affordable housing; if/when opportunities arise. ♦ Support a strong Hanover Conservation Commission. ♦ Engage with Dartmouth on campus master plan. ♦ Continue to support environmental education in Hanover schools.
<p>Clarify our advocacy role and build our skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Take action to advance social and environmental justice. ♦ Affirm criteria for local advocacy.




ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

GOAL: *The Hanover Conservancy will remain a vital organization for our community, with increasing diversity and financial stability in the years to come.*

During our first 60 years, we have made significant progress in building community support to ensure we deliver on our promise of protecting and stewarding lands in Hanover. Financial stability, especially unrestricted funds, will allow us to maximize our impact. We will continue to diversify our leadership and membership to serve the entire community.



OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS
Deepen base of support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Expand the board-designated endowment to support critical land stewardship responsibilities and operations into the future.◆ Create a more diverse revenue stream. Enhance corporate and planned giving programs.
Ensure a diverse, inclusive organization with programs and properties welcoming to all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion into every aspect of our work. Broaden board and committee representation to reflect a new diversity plan. Reach out to a variety of communities on our lands and in our programs.◆ Deepen engagement with other non-profits in Hanover and beyond. Seek ways for board members to act as liaisons to increase mutual support.
Ensure a high standard of performance and fiduciary responsibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Adhere to Land Trust Alliance Standards & Practices; maintain staff training in best practices; identify areas that need improvement and develop a plan for addressing those needs.

“ Thank you so much for all your wonderful work. I am very happy to donate to such a worthy cause.”



HANOVER CONSERVANCY

71 Lyme Road, Hanover, NH 03755
(603) 643-3433

hanoverconservancy.org

Lands acquired & owned by the Hanover Conservancy	453.5 acres
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Lands protected by a Hanover Conservancy conservation easement or deed restriction	554.9 acres
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Lands acquired by others for conservation with Hanover Conservancy support	1,664 acres
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Total conservation footprint 1961-2021	2,672.4 acres
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